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UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 002505

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON CAFTA, DECEMBER 14, 2005

1. On 12/14 the Tegucigalpa-based liberal daily "La Tribuna" published an editorial entitled "Bomb Race." "After congressmen took a break to dedicate their time to the political campaign, the legislative session began with a great number of delayed legislations that weren't discussed before elections. But the Executive branch is in desperate need of their approval because it is urgent for CAFTA to begin."

"Because CAFTA has to start on January 2006, the Secretary of Commerce is pushing the congressmen to approve the decrees pending."

"The congressmen are not happy that they are being pushed upon and even threaten that CAFTA is in danger if they don't finish the projects. One congressman was upset by the presence of the Secretary of Industry and said: 'Isn't it true that the U.S. or its President will become desperate or won't sleep because Honduras doesn't approve these laws.'"

"There is no way that all this work will be done conscientiously. The country still doesn't know the content of CAFTA because it was never adequately advertised and is still ignorant of all the various requirements. The economic sectors won't participate in the debate and the discussion of its content, which is very different from how the government negotiated FTA."

Ford